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Annotated Bibliography: The Impact of Divorce on a Child’s Intimate Relationships

Bulduc, Jessica L., Sandra L. Caron, and Mary Ellin Logue. "The Effects of Parental Divorce on College Students." *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 46.3/4 (2007): 83-104. Academic Search Premier. Web. 9 Nov. 2012.

This article on the impact of divorce completes a study and explores the experiences of 17 college students whose parents divorced while they were attending college. In this collaborative study the survey investigated three areas of focus: the primary response to the student had to the divorce, the power the divorce placed on the student’s relationship with their parents, and the personal impact divorce had on the student. Bulduc, Caron, and Logue’s findings showed that around 50% of the students foresaw their own parent’s divorce, while others did not initially see it coming but were also not surprised when they found out. Some specific findings were that the majority of the students felt their parents had only stayed together for as long as they did just because they were worried about the effect it would place on them as children. They also found in times of divorce the students said they had a more prominent relationship with their mother and a more distant relationship with their father.

Bulduc, Caron, and Logue’s main point is that certain dynamics of divorce cause a chain reaction that interferes and causes difficulty in their children’s adult relationships. The points he stress all relate to the fact that children are affected negatively by divorce in the long run. Their purpose of study and methodology is clearly expressed and they also provide extensive information about their topics through a sophisticated but elementary approach. All of the points argued in their research article are backed up with hard evidence. They are mainly writing to the parents of divorce and also parents who are still married. They are trying to help prevent this occurrence from happening and to provide answers to questions that a child might ask their parent in this situation.

This article would support the research of divorce and the effect it places on a child’s relationship because of the correlation between how a child sees a relationship through their own parents’ and how they will see their own future relationships. The authors’ attitude towards the subject is very clear. This could be used as solid evidence in a research paper to further back a certain claim on parental divorce and its relation to a child’s future intimate relationships. The only downfall of using this article as a source is the study he formed was of only 17 individuals. If he would have included more people it would make his claims more believable.

Coontz, Stephanie. "The Origins of Modern Divorce." *Family Process* 46.1 (2007): 7-16. Academic Search Premier. Web. 7 Dec. 2012.

Stephanie Coontz is a faculty member in the department of History and Family Studies at The Evergreen State College who examines the high rates of marriages ending in divorce and the different origins of contemporary divorce in North America and Western Europe. She finds that the origins of modern divorce patterns date back to more than 200 years ago. She also examines how the processes of divorce have evolved over these years. However, interestingly enough she finds that the vulnerability of marriage has mostly remained the same even after all this time. Coontz sums up her article by stating that the role of divorce in modern society holds the same principles of reasoning for divorce in past generations.

Coontz’s article was very informative on the background and origins of divorce and how it has changed and advanced. Her statistics were presented clearly and served its purpose. The article was not directed argumentatively but more so educational. Her thesis states she is going to examine origins of divorce in North America and Western Europe, but in the actual body of her article she brings up East Africa and Japan and mostly focuses on Europe with a little of information directed towards North America. She should have either revised or followed through with her thesis.

For research purposes this article could be used to great benefit. It can be a great source of pure, unbiased data since it has more of an informative approach instead of persuasive or argumentative.

Fagan, Patrick F. and Aaron Churchill. “The Effects of Divorce on Children” *Marri Research* (2012): 20-160. Marriage & Religion Research Institute. Web. 6 December 2012

Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill present extensive information on the topic of the effects of divorce and children. They specifically examine how divorce damages it causes to society and the weakening of the family and child/parent relationship. Fagan and Churchill go further into detail about impact detrimentally that divorce causes such as: religious practice, education, the marketplace, government, and health and well-being. They also proclaim that parental divorce affects the children’s sexual practices and attitudes as adults and also causes increased troubles in romantic relationships. Fagan and Churchill conclude that family is the “building block of society, and marriage is its foundation” (47) and this said foundation is becoming more weak as fewer adults marry and more adults divorce.

Their article provides vast quantities of information on a variety of issue related to divorce and covered each well. Each topic was broken up into subtopics and helped the flow of the paper as a whole. Their use of tables, graphs, and statistics were a good visual stimulant to help readers comprehend the information presented. Their stance on parental divorce was apparent and they specifically directed their article to people who oppose that parental divorce has no effect on children. It is also informative for those experiencing divorce as a child and as the parent.

This article would be great for an argumentative paper because of the many opportunities to cite with all of the information provided. They also show opposing views in their article as well to make their claim stronger which in fact helps a researcher make their own claim stronger as well.

Helweg-Larsen, Marie, Hilary G. Harding, and William M. P. Klein. "Will I Divorce or Have a Happy Marriage?: Gender Differences In Comparative Optimism and Estimation of Personal Chances Among U.S. College Students." *Basic & Applied Social Psychology* 33.2 (2011): 157-166. Academic Search Premier. Web. 16 Nov. 2012.

Helweg-Larsen, Harding, and Klein are all accredited psychologists in the field of divorce, marriage, and gender control. In this article they state that the gender differences of the child that experiences parental divorce provides different results on their outlook on marriage and divorce. In their research of unmarried college students it showed that men displayed better comparative and personal optimism than women for having an enjoyable marriage but not for getting divorced.

The three authors developed a thesis on a topic that was ill-researched and provided extensive amounts of evidence to back their claim. Their style of writing was very persuasive without throwing their opinion on the reader. They use their own study to show that gender is a factor in determining the outlook on relationships in marriage. While they focused on college students they provided little background information other than that they were in fact college students. This hurt their research on the emotional aspect. If they were to provide prime examples it would help the reader connect more easily to the idea.

Although the article provides little emotion to play off of, the authors provided solid evidence to back their thesis. The information portrayed in their article could be used to provide support on how being a male or female experiencing parental divorce plays a major role in how they see and act towards divorce. While this would be a great source to use for that topic alone, it would not be a great source to use overall because the article has a great amount of irrelevant information to the topic.

Kirk, Allison. "The Effects of Divorce on Young Adults' Relationship Competence: The Influence of Intimate Friendships." *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 38.1/2 (2003): 61. Academic Search Premier. Web. 11 Nov. 2012.

Allison Kirk, a doctoral student in psychological studies at UCLA, presents a study that examines the potential effect or contribution divorce places on the relationship proficiency of young adults. She specifically measured self esteem, fear of intimacy, romantic relationship satisfaction, and beliefs about marriage to further back her claim. In Kirk’s article she also studies other factors that relate to her main topic such as the life of the children after divorce, differences between divorced and intact families, and the role of friendship as a defense against the effects of divorce. In her findings it showed that divorce did not affect relationship proficiency but did manipulate the self esteem, fear of intimacy, and romantic satisfaction of young adults. Products of divorce were more affected by the fear and expectations of divorce. Kirk’s concluding findings are that family upbringing and the value of friendship are key interpreters to a young adult’s relationship proficiency.

Kirk’s article provides clear and easy to follow information. The structure and style of writing guides the reader through her article with ease. Her use of headings for each subtopic makes it easy for the reader to reflect on her work without having to skim through the whole article to find information about a particular issue. She also provides a glossary for words that some might not know the definition of, which further helps the reader comprehend what she is arguing about.

Kirk is an excellent source to use because her own sources are all mostly up to date and relevant. Her comparison to a normal family can also help to make counter claims on the subject. Her in-depth research and consideration of variables that go along with divorced families gives many opportunities to cite credible information into a research paper.

Mahl, David. "The Influence of Parental Divorce on the Romantic Relationship Beliefs of Young Adults." *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 34.3/4 (2001): 89. Academic Search Premier. Web. 8 Nov. 2012.

David Mahl presents a high quality study that examines the outlook of college students on their romantic relationships and experiences following the divorce of their parents. For Mahl’s study he interviewed 28 college students about their intimate relationships and found that inconsistency was prevalent in the nature of their divorce-linked experiences. He captures this by categorizing the variability into groups such as the pre-divorce situation and post-divorce changes. Mahl constructed a representation to help further interpret his research. His results show parental divorce should not just be seen as a negative event. There are also many circumstances where a divorce has strengthened a family’s bond as well.

In Mahl’s article his opinion is apparent and his model of research reflects as such. Unlike other articles where a research study has been done, Mahl’s findings showed different results to his own outlook on the subject. The flow of his article is somewhat jumbled in areas, providing little use of transition-type headings. This could make it hard to key in on certain issues without having to annotate his whole work. However, he is very relatable with his addition of personal experiences he placed throughout his article.

Mahl proficiently uses many real-life situations and includes personal interviews of people who have gone through divorce and are now young adults in intimate relationships. This is a major strength to his claim and can provide personality to one’s own research paper. It also provides an opposite result to what was being studied which could provide some counter evidence in an argument to not seem as hard-driven to people reading the article who oppose the opinion of the researcher.

Ming, Cui. "The Differential Effects of Parental Divorce and Marital Conflict on Young Adult Romantic Relationships." *Personal Relationships* 17.3 (2010): 331-343. Academic Search Premier. Web. 10 Nov. 2012

“The Different Effects of Parental Divorce and Marital Conflict on Young Adult Romantic Relationships” examines in a short-term study the effects of divorce and marital conflict on young adult children’s romantic relationships. He uses a sample of 285 young adults and presented information using formulas and equations to support his hypothesis that divorce and marital conflict were independently connected with young adult children’s intimate relationships. He does so through many different methods. Ming shows parental divorce is correlated with young adult’s poor relationship quality through a pessimistic attitude toward marriage and an optimistic attitude toward divorce. It also interferes with sufficient efforts of commitment on their own current relationships. Ming states these findings in his research can be used for future research, and also that his research has not stopped there and is always evolving.

Ming doesn’t clearly state a side on the topic he is researching but appears more neutral or undisclosed. His style of writing is merely the research and facts on the subject, leaving no room for personality. However, he does present quality information while doing so.

While Ming’s extensive use of formulas and equations to form variables in his research presented great information, it could easily go over the head of many readers that are trying to use his work as a source for research. To be able to read his graphs and diagrams you have to understand his formulas quite extensively. Although, he does present his facts clearly that he cited from other sources. For a novice researcher, his findings should be used sparingly, but as stated his information is high in quality that a reader can directly relate to their own research topic.

Nielsen, Linda. "College Aged Students with Divorced Parents: Facts and Fiction." *College Student Journal* 33.4 (1999): 543. Academic Search Premier. Web. 9 Nov. 2012.

Linda Nielsen observes what is real and fake in the statistics of parental divorce and the effect placed on college students. She considers many different situations divorce places on a young adult such as: the realities statistically, the impact on sons versus daughters, divorced mothers who have not remarried, relationships with fathers, etc. She explains that with the large number of college aged individuals who have divorced parents, teachers and therapists need to be able to know the difference between what is factual and what is speculation when it comes to the pressure and impact divorce and remarriage places on young adult children. Nielsen finds that sons and young people whose mothers do not remarry within a few years of divorce commonly are more affected than daughters in the same situation. Mutually, sons and daughters have more deprived relationships with their fathers.

Nielsen distinctively displays her information and elaborates efficiently in doing so. She does a very good job of explaining her reasoning of her arguments and presents them in orderly fashion. She is mainly trying to reach out to educators and counselors to help them understand more clearly the situation these young adults in college and does so effectively. She covers every aspect of each of her claims and it provides seal-proof evidence to her claim.

This article would support the research question in mind because it provides so many angles to divorce and the effect on young adults. Nielsen’s opinion is very clear which leaves little room for speculation about her writing, thus providing a reliable source for the researcher to utilize.

Ottoway, J. Amber. “The Impact of Parental Divorce on the Intimate Relationships of Adult Offspring: A Review of the Literature” *Graduate Journal of Counseling Psychology:* Vol. 2:Iss.1, Article 5 (38-46) Web 8 Nov. 2012

Amber J. Ottoway provides a detailed overview on parental divorce and the impact it places on the intimate relationships of the child as an adult. Ottoway outlines the effects of parental divorce on an adult’s relationship into associate factors such as the age of the child at the time of divorce, gender, family conflict, and trust. She finds in her research that each factor, excluding family conflict, contradicts the findings on the effects of parental divorce. She determines this is due to lack of research on this subject matter, therefore concluding that more research needs to be done on this topic along with altering research methods to eliminate the mixed findings.

Ottoway is somewhat a pioneer on this aspect on the subject of divorce and child relationships but does well explaining her findings and has the sources to back them up. She outlines her ideas clearly and thoroughly explains each one with detail. She uses her sources to her advantage and provides quality information while doing so.

The article supports the factors that directly relate to divorce and a child’s intimate relationship that she exposed and is great to use as a base in my research paper and find more information about this topic. While Ottoway does state in her conclusion there is much more research to be done, she also provides suggestions of subtopics to further back the main claim. The one downfall that even she expressed is some of her research she was able to find was outdated. That being said, a researcher should take caution while taking information from her article.

Stolberg, L. Arnold and Elizabeth Mullet. “Divorce and Its Impact on the Intimate Relationships of Young Adults” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2002, Vol. 38 Issue 1/2, p39.Print

Elizabeth Mullet and Arnold L. Stolberg present a study of the long-term impact divorce ant the impact is has on a young adult’s intimate relationships. They did so by assessing the different levels of intimacy and communication patterns in four types of couples: ones which neither spouse experienced parental divorce, where only one partner, male or female, experienced parental divorce, and where neither partner experienced parental divorce. In their study all subjects were undergraduate psychology students between 18 and 30 years of age who have currently been in a relationship for at least three months. Through a set of questionnaires that assessed intimacy and communications, Mullet and Stolberg reported the female had significant lower levels of intimacy and mutually constructive communication and avoidance conflict. However, divorce did not seem to influence intimacy and communication patterns in relationships where the male only experienced divorce. Mullet and Stolberg concluded at this stage in development there was not a compounded effect on intimacy when both partners experienced their parent’s divorce.

This journal is mostly a study that shows the results of their findings. While they present statistics about divorce in the beginning of their study, most of their writing is just showing the outcome of their research. While they presented the outcomes clearly it was done blandly. It would be hard for a reader to connect.

The journal does show many statistics through formulas and tables to make their claims plausible that could easily be used to support a researcher’s proposal. The different dynamics of research they portray gives insight to different variables of divorce and provides specific information and a more in-depth look at divorce. It would be great to use as a form of rebuttal.

Trotter, Pamela B. “The Influence of Parental Romantic Relationships on College Students’ Attitudes about Romantic Relationships” *College Student Journal*; Mar2010, Vol. 44 Issue 1, p71-83. Print

Pamela B. Trotter begins her article by stating that numerous marriages and relationships of young adults are in jeopardy of becoming divorce and ending because they did/do not have healthy examples to follow because their parents did not provide a quality relationship to learn from. Her studies show in a survey she conducted to evaluate unwed college students and their attitudes about relationships and if their attitudes varied depending on their perception of their parents’ relationships or conjugal status. It was theorized that students who accounted positive parental relationships would pose a smaller threat for divorce than those who accounted negative ones. Trotter also noted that the interpersonal behaviors exhibited in parental marriages like “being jealous, domineering, critical, moody and angry” predicted conflict in their children’s marriages. (80)

The information Trotter includes in her article supplies support for her main claim that the results of parental divorce jeopardizes their child’s relationship. Her presentation of her own information as well as outside sources provides substantial support for her thesis. Trotter is trying to reach out to not only college students that are experiencing this problem but also parents by showing how everything they do causes a reaction in some way in their kid’s lives. She clearly gives her opinion on the matter and takes advantage of every opportunity to exploit these throughout her argument.

Trotter presents noteworthy information that can be used for the research topic shown in this bibliography. The amount of situations she announces to support her argument provides extensive opportunities to cite in a research paper. Trotter’s research will benefit the topics in the study of research and provide feedback to other sources.

Van Schaick, Kelly. “The Impact of Paternal Involvement and Parental Divorce on Young Adults' Intimate Relationships” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2001, Vol. 36 Issue 1/2, p99.Print

Kelly Van Schaick explores the long-term effects of divorce on young adults, primarily focusing on the impact a father, over an extended period of time, has on their child’s intimate relationships in young adulthood. Schaick gathered 408 participants from divorced and intact families between the ages of 18-34 and had them complete a report based on paternal involvement, intimacy, commitment, security, and trust. It can be implied his audience falls under this same age category as well. He performed many analyses to find out the amount of influence paternal involvement and parental marital status placed on relationship outcomes, and found that paternal participation considerably manipulates all of the dimensions of a relationship that was assessed in his study despite of parental marital status. He finds parental divorce is directly related to the decrease in paternal involvement.

Schaick offers extensive information and displays it clearly in the form of tables and graphs. The use of headings made his research flow and easy to comprehend. He is very clear on how he thinks paternal involvement is a major factor in a child’s intimate relationships as a young adult. His article is extensively researched. He uses outside sources to help back his claim but concludes many of his findings from his own study as well.

The use of statistics that he proved in his study is a great tool for a writer to cite information from. Schaick’s study represented a unique approach to assessing the impact of divorce on a child’s intimate relationships but is effective in doing so. His clear view on the subject gives concrete support to contrast disagreeing opinions, thus making it a great form of support in a research paper.